DEFENSE HEALTH NETWORK PACIFIC RIM

NAVAL MEDICAL FORCES PACIFIC

PACIFIC PULSE

Congressman Bergman's Visit Highlights NMCSD's Advanced Maxillofacial Restoration Capabilities

U.S. Rep. Jack Bergman (MI-01) and Cmdr. Daniel Hammer, oral maxillofacial surgeon and Maxillofacial Restoration Program director, talk during a tour of Naval Medical Center San Diego's (NMCSD) dental clinic Aug. 11. Bergman was visiting NMCSD to learn how they support readiness, health care delivery, and the Maxillofacial Restoration Program, an innovative initiative that is transforming dental readiness and patient's lives. (DOD photo by Regena Kowitz)

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A MESSAGE FROM REAR ADM. BROWN

Team,

As we close out this quarter, I want to thank each of you for your professionalism, teamwork, and commitment to mission. The care you provide for our patients and your support for our operational forces demonstrates the excellence that defines military medicine.

Across our network, your accomplishments continue to strengthen both readiness and the quality of care we provide. The implementation of our new central coding contract is streamlining processes and improving accuracy across all MTFs, a key step toward systemwide efficiency. At NMC San Diego, the Maxillofacial Restoration Program continues to set the standard for innovation in complex reconstructive surgery, while the command's new Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit designation ensures the most advanced care for our smallest patients.

Our teams continue to save lives and build trust every day. From USNH/USNMRTC Okinawa's quick response that aided an Australian Sailor in distress to the extraordinary actions of BHC/NMRTU Sasebo's team that saved a Sailor's life, your readiness and expertise make all the difference.

Collaboration across the services also remains one of our greatest strengths—from USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka's partnership with the Air Force's 374th Medical Group, ensuring continuity of surgical services, to NHC/NMRTC Lemoore's Chief Medical Officer training Army providers, ensuring a stronger, more integrated medical force.

Innovation is thriving at every level of our organization. Hospitalman Savannah Bilben, a junior corpsman at Yokosuka, exemplifies how initiative and curiosity can spark meaningful change. Her process improvement...

(Continued on p. 3)

Rear. Adm. Kevin Brown

DHA PRIORITIES:

- Enabling combat support to the joint force in competition, crisis, or conflict
- Building a modernized, integrated, and resilient health delivery system
- Dedicated and inspired teams of professionals driving military health's next evolution

A MESSAGE FROM REAR ADM. BROWN

...work reminds us that leadership isn't defined by rank—it's defined by action. Meanwhile, patient satisfaction scores at Lemoore and USNH Guam—through JOES and TRISS—reflect your unwavering commitment to patient-centered care.

We are focused on advancing the skills of our own medical force. Our EXMED teams are honed at NEMWDC, building their live-saving capabilities to prepare for real-world missions. During Talisman Saber 25, Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System 4, led by Cmdr. Paul Lewis, enhanced the EXMED's capabilities and integrated that valuable experience into USNH Guam's efforts to provide Level III trauma care. Highlighting our strengthened alliance with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, we celebrated the graduation of the first Philippine Navy Marine corpsman from the U.S. Navy Independent Duty Corpsman School. Research collaborations with institutions such as the University of Ghana Medical Center are advancing our understanding of infectious diseases, while the recognition of health promotion excellence at Naval Medical Research Unit (NAMRU) San Antonio demonstrates the dedication and professionalism of our team.

Finally, we welcomed new commanding officers and directors across the region and network at NH/NMRTC Camp Pendleton, NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms, NHC/NMRTC Lemoore, USNH/USNMRTC Okinawa, and NMRC. Each change brings fresh energy, new ideas, and continued momentum to our shared mission.

Thank you for all that you do to care for our patients, support one another, and advance readiness across the Pacific. Your teamwork, innovation, and compassion continue to make extraordinary care routine.

Respectfully,
RDML Kevin Brown, MC, USN
Commander, Naval Medical Forces Pacific
Director, Defense Health Network Pacific Rim

HN Savannah Bilben (Photo courtesy of USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs.)

Surgeon General's Lines of Efforts:

LOE 1. Deliver Expeditionary Medicine Systems (EXMEDS)

LOE 2. Increase Sailor and Marine Deployability

LOE 3. Provide Quality Healthcare and Patient Safety Across the Naval Force

LOE 4. Recruit and Retain Navy Medicine Shipmates

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Lemoore Dental Clinics Achieve Perfect Scores

NHC Lemoore and Naval BHC Fallon's dental units posted their first-ever Joint Outpatient Experience Survey scores, achieving 100% satisfaction ratings for provider and staff courtesy and respect toward beneficiaries in March and April 2025.

Joint Outpatient Experience Survey JOES

DHN Indo-Pacific Director Visits Guam

On June 26, Brig. Gen. Deydre Teyhen, DHN Indo-Pacific director, visited USNH Guam to learn more about the island's medical capabilities. She toured the hospital and the 36th Medical Group, met with the commander of Joint Region Marianas, and delivered a presentation titled "Leading the Joy and Soul Back to Medicine" to hospital staff.

Network Launches Centralized Coding Contract

The Defense Health Network Pacific Rim implemented a network-level bridge coding contract July 1 employing 32 full-time coders and one supervisor working remotely. The team will process clinic billables, inpatient, APV, observation, emergency, and outpatient encounters across all MTFs to improve accuracy, efficiency, and standardization. Funded with resources from previous contracts, this initiative eliminates the need for each facility to manage separate coding contracts and staff. As of Aug. 6, the team has coded more than $16 million in encounters and eliminated backlogs while preventing new ones from forming in fiscal 2025.

NMCSD Hosts VA/DoD Health Affairs Executive Director

NMC San Diego hosted Mr. Patrick W. Picardo, executive director, Office of VA/DoD Health Affairs, July 9 to reinforce a shared commitment to expanding access to high-quality care for veterans. MTF leadership emphasized efforts to improve base access, optimize operating room capacity, and strengthen alignment with VA partners.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

VA Executive Director Visits NH Camp Pendleton

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton hosted Patrick Picardo, Executive Director of the Veterans Health Administration, and his team on July 9 to discuss opportunities to expand access to care for the mutual beneficiaries of the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

Photos courtesy of NH/NMRTC Camp Pendleton Public Affairs.

Capt. Damin to Lead NMRTC and NH Camp Pendleton

Capt. Virginia Damin assumed command of NMRTC Camp Pendleton on July 11, also taking on the role of director of NH Camp Pendleton. Rear Adm. Guido Valdes, NMFP commander and DHN-PR director, presided over the change of command ceremony, where Damin relieved Capt. Jenny Burkett.

Photos courtesy of NH/NMRTC Bremerton Public Affairs.

Acting ASDHA Visits NH Bremerton

Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Dr. Stephen Ferrara visited NH Bremerton July 14 to gain a better understanding of the healthcare services provided and the unique geographical complexities of the region. During the visit, he met with MTF Director Capt. Karla Lepore and addressed staff during an all-hands call, answering questions and recognizing several individuals with challenge coins.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

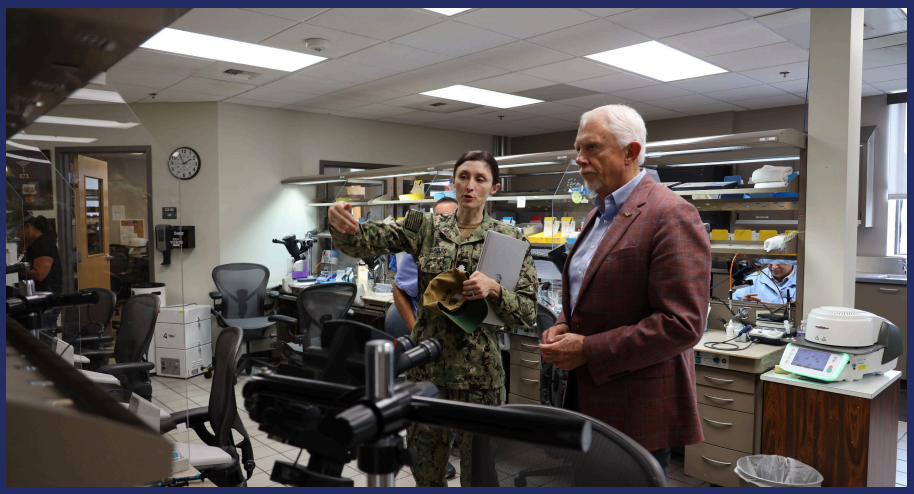
Navy Surgeon General Visits San Diego

Rear Adm. Darin Via, Navy surgeon general, visited NMC/NMRTC San Diego July 24, conducting an admiral's call, recognizing exemplary performers and touring Labor and Delivery, Emergency Department and Mental Health spaces. Via noted the facility's increased patient volume, case complexity and overall contributions to readiness and beneficiary care. Staff received direct information on Navy Medicine's support posture for fleet and Marine forces while providing input for the surgeon general's review and action. The visit concluded with an office call with NMCSD Director who is also NMRTC San Diego's commander.

Photo courtesy of NMC/NMRTC San Diego Public Affairs.

Maxillofacial Restoration Program Featured During Congressman's Visit to NMCSD

Rep. Jack Bergman (R-MI) visited NMC San Diego Aug. 11, demonstrating support for DHA's military healthcare mission. The visit included a town hall with staff, Maxillofacial Reconstruction Program brief and discussion, medical and dental facility tours, lunch with service members from Michigan, and a visit to the DHA Regional Dental Lab at Naval Base San Diego. Bergman gained insight into NMCSD's critical role providing advanced reconstructive surgery and restorative care for patients recovering from significant facial injuries or conditions.



Photos courtesy of DHN-PR Public Affairs.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Yokosuka Team Inspects British Aircraft Carrier

USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka's Preventive Medicine team conducted a port quarantine inspection of HMS Prince of Wales, the U.K. Royal Navy's flagship aircraft carrier, Aug. 12 to ensure compliance with international health regulations. The eight-member team worked to prevent importation of infectious diseases, detect health hazards, and maintain safe port operations. The visiting carrier is part of Operation Highmast, which aims to improve interoperability and preparedness of NATO forces and global allies in the Indo-Pacific theater to address diverse global threats.

HMS Prince of Wales. (DVIDS)

Congressman Larsen Attends VA Clinic Opening at Oak Harbor

U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen delivered opening remarks during the Aug. 20 ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new VA Puget Sound Clinic located within NHC Oak Harbor. The clinic is the first VA clinic in Washington state established on a military installation. The VA clinic will provide comprehensive primary care services, bringing resources closer to veterans who previously faced significant travel barriers.

Photo courtesy of NHC/NMRTC Oak Harbor Public Affairs.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Navy Secretary's Spouse Visits San Diego

NMC San Diego hosted Amy Phelan, spouse of the Navy Secretary, for a visit highlighting the Emergency Department, Comprehensive Combat and Complex Casualty Care (C5), the Navy Wounded Warrior program and the San Diego Fisher House Aug. 26. Discussions centered on NMCSD's approach to optimizing emergency department capacity, navigating DHA billet realignments, streamlining onboarding processes and implementing innovative measures to sustain mission execution. Phelan was briefed on NMCSD's training pipeline, C5 rehabilitation programs and holistic support provided to wounded warriors and their families.

Photo courtesy of NMC/NMRTC San Diego Public Affairs.

Australian Sailor Gets Emergency Surgery in Okinawa

USNH Okinawa provided emergency medical care to a member of the Royal Australian Navy Sept. 7. Within 24 hours, the fleet liaison team arranged for the sailor to be medically evacuated from HMAS Brisbane. Through coordination with the Australian Naval Attache in Tokyo, an Australian helicopter landed on the MTF's helipad, the patient was evaluated in the emergency room, had surgery, and was briefly hospitalized.

HMAS Brisbane. (DVIDS)

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

JSDF Honors USNH Yokosuka Leader

Photo courtesy of USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs.

Rear Adm. Satoshi Tsukazaki, commander of Japan Self-Defense Forces Hospital Yokosuka, hosted USNH Yokosuka Director Capt. Torrin Velazquez (also the commanding officer of USNMRTC Yokosuka), outgoing MTF Deputy Director Capt. Richard Gilliard (also outgoing USNMRTC XO), and incoming MTF Deputy Director Capt. Donavon YapShing (also incoming XO) for an office call. During the visit, Tsukazaki thanked Gilliard for strengthening partnerships through joint exercises that enhance medical readiness and interoperability and presented him with a Letter of Appreciation recognizing his contributions to allied cooperation.

NMCSD Restores Level III NICU Status

NMCSD's NICU. (DVIDS)

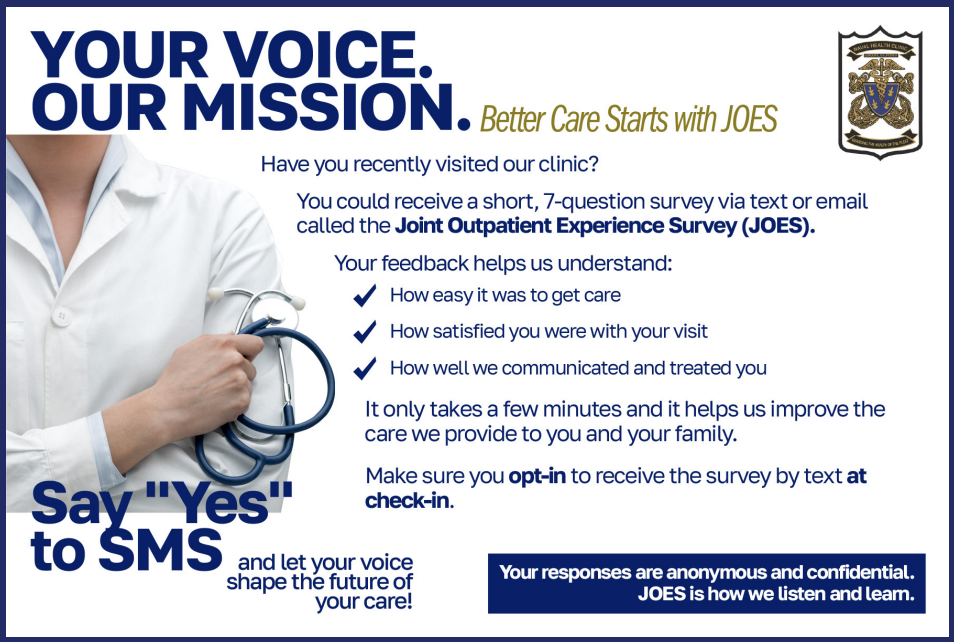
NMC San Diego officially returned to Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) status after more than a year operating as a Level II facility due to staffing constraints. This restores the command's capacity to deliver sustained, high-acuity neonatal care, including treatment of extremely premature infants. The upgrade, pivotal for NMCSD's role as the largest Military Treatment Facility (MTF) in the Pacific Rim Network, supports the Maternal-Child Line of Effort (LOE), enhances delivery services, strengthens Pediatrics Graduate Medical Education, and enables the NICU to serve as a referral center for other MTFs and TRICARE network partners.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Network Streamlines Reserve EHR Access

The Defense Health Network Pacific Rim Healthcare Operations Directorate is implementing a process improvement to ensure timely MHS GENESIS electronic health record access for reserve flight surgeons assigned to network military treatment facilities. The initiative addresses common delays caused by late training assignments in Joint Knowledge Online despite computer-based training-only requirements for reservists. The new process mandates early submission of Electronic Health Record Access forms and proactive notification to the MHS GENESIS Account Provisioning Team before orders begin. Reserve liaisons will coordinate pre-arrival provisioning, enabling Joint Knowledge Online access and training completion during drill weekends or before annual training. A centralized tracking process using the MHS GENESIS Suspension Tracker will monitor progress and ensure accountability across participating facilities.

JOES-7 Communication Pilot to Boost Survey Participation


YOUR VOICE.
OUR MISSION.
Better Care Starts with JOES
Have you recently visited our clinic?
You could receive a short, 7-question survey via text or email called the Joint Outpatient Experience Survey (JOES).
Your feedback helps us understand:
How easy it was to get care
How satisfied you were with your visit
How well we communicated and treated you
It only takes a few minutes and it helps us improve the care we provide to you and your family.
Make sure you opt-in to receive the survey by text at check-in.
Say "Yes" to SMS
and let your voice shape the future of your care!
Your responses are anonymous and confidential.
JOES is how we listen and learn.

DHN Pacific Rim partnered with NHC Lemoore's public affairs officer and patient experience chief on a pilot program to boost JOES-7 survey response rates through targeted SMS outreach. The initiative, launched July 28, increased SMS survey opt-ins by 213 patients in four days, with more than 57% of those prompted by front desk staff agreeing to participate.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Yokosuka Hosts UK Medical Leaders

USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka hosted UK Air Marshal Walton, director general of UK Defense Medical Services, and UK Commodore Hofman, head of UK Navy Healthcare, for discussions on international medical cooperation. The group, which included Col. Cotton, U.S. Forces Japan surgeon, and Capt. Allen, 7th Fleet surgeon, discussed interoperability, international privileging and credentialing, blood capabilities and finding savings without compromising care. The delegation toured the hospital's four-bed ICU, which uses tele-ICU technology, and the multi-service unit where inpatient teams care for diverse admissions including pediatric, post-operative and postpartum patients. Officials also discussed telemedicine programs including PATH, Global Telehealth Program and tele-radiology as mechanisms to provide care without physical presence.

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

TMO Visits NHCP to Discuss Dental and Staffing Needs

Photo courtesy of NMC/NMRTC San Diego Public Affairs.

On June 23, Rear Adm. Pamela Miller, medical officer of the Marine Corps, visited NH Camp Pendleton to meet with senior leaders about dental care for Marines stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and to review facility challenges. Discussions also focused on skill sustainment for Marine Corps medical staff and their role in augmenting hospital staffing.

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

TMO Highlights Medical Force Generation in San Diego

Rear Adm. Pamela Miller, medical officer of the Marine Corps and vice chief of the U.S. Bureau of Medicine and Surgery for Reserve Policy and Integration, visited NMC San Diego's clinic at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego June 25. She emphasized the importance of medical force generation, supporting both recruit transformation into Marines and training the next generation of Navy emergency physicians during their residency graduation.

Photo courtesy of NMC/NMRTC San Diego Public Affairs.

Pacific Fleet Senior Enlisted Leader Visits NMC/NMRTC SD

On July 2, Fleet Master Chief Don Davis, the senior enlisted Sailor in the Pacific Fleet, visited NMC/NMRTC San Diego for an in-depth tour and strategic engagement with staff and leadership. The visit emphasized the MTF and command's vital role in sustaining operational readiness and supporting joint force lethality through trauma care, expeditionary medical capabilities, and combat-ready personnel. Davis praised the team's professionalism and dedication, noting the command's indispensable contributions to projecting medical power ashore and afloat.

Photo courtesy of NMC/NMRTC San Diego Public Affairs.

Twentynine Palms Enhances Life Support Skill

NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms' Branch Health Clinic/NMRTU Bridgeport and the Mountain Warfare Training Center Mountain Medicine (MMED) team conducted joint Advanced Life Support (ALS) training and recertification on June 10. Participants, including HMC Jerred Lee, HM2 Ryan Shields, HM3 Kendrick Perata, and Lt. Kevin Lawrence, successfully completed the training, fostering teamwork and enhancing interoperability. This training directly supports DHA and Navy Medicine's goals of enabling combat support to the Joint Force and improving partnerships across commands by enhancing critical life-saving skills

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

USNH Yokosuka and 374th Medical Group Partner to Maintain Surgical Services

Surgical teams from USNH Yokosuka and the 374th Medical Group at Yokota Air Base collaborated July 9-11 to maintain patient care during repairs to the main sterile processing department's HVAC system. The successful joint effort ensured safe surgical services were provided to five patients by sharing critical resources, including surgical equipment, credentialing providers, and transportation of patients and surgical teams between the facilities. This ensured continued surgical readiness and demonstrated exceptional inter-service cooperation.

374th Medical Group .(DVIDS)

DHA Leader Visits Twentynine Palms

NH Twentynine Palms hosted Rear Adm. Matthew Case, DHA's acting assistant director for healthcare administration, and the Medical Service Corps chief on July 30. Case met with Maj. Gen. Mark Clingan, commanding general of Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, reinforcing DHA's commitment as a combat support agency dedicated to warfighter readiness. During his hospital and Adult Medical Care Clinic tour, Case was particularly impressed with the clinic's modern facilities and Senior Chief Matthew Ritchie's demonstration of the Sick Call Screening process. Case held an all-MSC officers call with BHC China Lake and BHC Bridgeport attending via Teams for a question-and-answer session, then celebrated the Medical Service Corps' 78th birthday with a traditional cake-cutting ceremony as the most senior MSC officer present.

Photos courtesy of NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms Public Affairs.

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

Lemoore Welcomes New Commanding Officer

Capt. Mathew Loe relieved Capt. Aaron Werbel as commanding officer of NMRTC Lemoore and director of NHC Lemoore July 17. Clinic staff demonstrated exceptional teamwork to complete the ceremony and Werbel's retirement while maintaining uninterrupted patient services in pharmacy, laboratory and radiology departments. The seamless leadership transition directly supports DHA's priority of building a resilient health delivery system.

Corpsmen Support NROTC Training Program

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class (HM3) Devin Giannini, Hospital Apprentice (HA) Asharia Hostzclaw, and Hospitalman (HN) Cyrus Mwangi assigned to NMRTC Lemoore and working at NHC Lemoore provided medical support during the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps New Student Indoctrination Program at Naval Service Training Command Great Lakes, Illinois, from June to Aug. 8. Their professional excellence contributed to 1,206 midshipmen candidates graduating in good health and enabled successful processing of 4,160 recruits during the "Summer Surge" at Recruit Training Command.

Lemoore CMO Trains Army Providers

Cmdr. Heather Hauck, chief medical officer for NMRTC/NHC Lemoore, delivered virtual presentations on general addiction and addiction care for Navy and Marine personnel during the annual Army Clinical Consultant/Medical Review Officer Course Aug. 21-22. Hauck educated 15 Army medical providers on specialized care requirements for Sailors and Marines who are treated at Army-run substance abuse clinics. Her training enhanced cross-service medical knowledge and interoperability within DHA.

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

Guam Hosts Pacific Partnership Tour

USNH/USNMRTC Guam hosted Pacific Partnership 25 clinical staff, including Canadian service members, for a hospital tour Sept. 4. The visit allowed nursing, medical, and dental staff to build relationships, increase interoperability, and share knowledge with U.S. and partner medical professionals. The tour also served as a recruiting opportunity to showcase hospital operations and encourage U.S. military members to accept orders to USNH/USNMRTC Guam.

Guam Team Provides Hands-On Training to Local Hospital

USNH Guam staff trained local hospital staff on Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy (CRRT), an advanced dialysis modality used for critically ill patients with acute kidney injury who are too unstable for traditional hemodialysis. Prior to this, the MTF was the only facility on island with CRRT capability. This initiative expanded access to lifesaving therapy, enhanced Guam's overall critical care capacity, strengthened military-civilian interoperability, and improved readiness for disaster response, surge operations, and delivery of complex patient care.

Twentynine Palms Enhances Healthcare Delivery Through Civilian Partnership

The Information Management Department (IMD) at NH Twentynine Palms partnered with Ridgecrest Regional Hospital, DHA, and DISA to develop and implement a centralized, HIPAA-compliant solution for medical records, enabling BHC China Lake to obtain post-discharge encounters and other pertinent medical records of referred patients in real-time. This reduces administrative burden and significantly improves the speed of medical information sharing, resulting in enhanced patient care. IMD plans to expand the scope of this successful initiative to other regional hospitals through shared partnerships, further streamlining medical record access and contributing to the DHA's vision of an integrated, efficient healthcare system.

DEFEND THE NATION

Innovate and Modernize

Twentynine Palms Installs Portable X-Ray

NH Twentynine Palms' Directorate for Clinical Support Services installed new portable X-ray units July 24. The enhancement supports DHA's mission by ensuring rapid diagnostic capabilities that improve patient outcomes and operational readiness, enabling healthcare teams to deliver timely, effective care to military personnel and beneficiaries regardless of location or mobility status.

Portable x-ray. (DVIDS)

BHC Sasebo Team Saves Sailor's Life

An active-duty Sailor presented to USNH Yokosuka's Branch Health Clinic (BHC) Sasebo with chest pain on Aug. 26. Staff quickly diagnosed a ST elevation myocardial infarction and Japanese Physician Fellow Dr. Okazaki obtained immediate acceptance at Sasebo General Hospital's cardiac catheterization laboratory. The rapid response resulted in a door-to-door time of 20 minutes, facilitated by integration of host nation physician fellows and collaboration with the local hospital community.

Hospital Corpsman at BHC Sasebo. (DVIDS)

Twentynine Palms Sets DMHRSi Best Practice

NH Twentynine Palms, under DMHRSi Manager Kathleen Bourikas, has streamlined Defense Medical Human Resource Systems Agency (DMHRSi) usage across all departments. New personnel receive tailored account setup and guidance, while Time Approvers ensure comprehensive templates. Consistent usage is reinforced through regular communications highlighting relevant Financial & Government (F&G) codes and individualized data insights. These efforts enhance efficiency and data accuracy, supporting the DHA's mission. DHN Pacific Rim Assistant Director of Healthcare Operations Brando Sumayao recognized the MTF's DMHRSi procedures as a best practice for a Network-wide project.

DEFEND THE NATION

Innovate and Modernize

Okinawa Lab Expands Diagnostic Capabilities

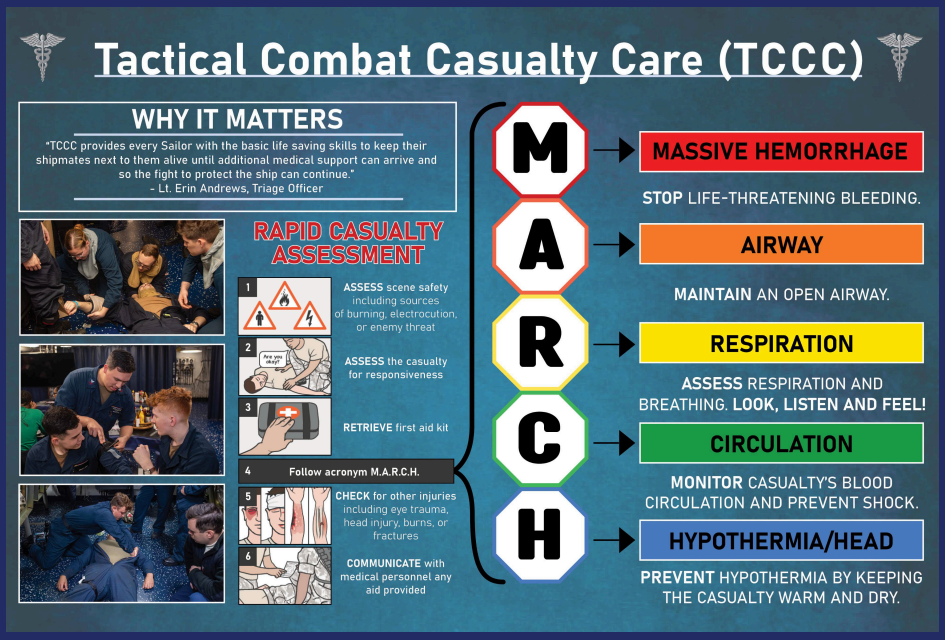
USNH Okinawa, in coordination with the Air Force's 18th Medical Group, has acquired the Cepheid GeneXpert PCR System for its laboratory. The new system, working with the existing Biofire FilmArray, expands on-site diagnostic capabilities for a range of conditions, including Meningitis/Encephalitis and Group Strep. This significantly reduces testing turnaround times, lessening the need to send samples to CONUS reference facilities and improving outpatient care.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

TCCC Training Enhances Security Force Readiness at China Lake

On June 18 and 26, Hospital Corpsmen 1st Class Caleb Goodman and Skylar Gilbert and Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Joshua Arrizongarcia, assigned to NMRTC Twentynine Palms and serving at NH Twentynine Palms, conducted two Tactical Combat Casualty Care Tier 1 courses for 26 Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake Security Force Sailors. The training improved the unit's compliance by 50%, strengthening their ability to deliver life-saving care and supporting their readiness mission.


Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC)
WHY IT MATTERS
"TCCC provides every Sailor with the basic life saving skills to keep their shipmates next to them alive until additional medical support can arrive and so the fight to protect the ship can continue."
- Lt. Erin Andrews, Triage Officer
RAPID CASUALTY ASSESSMENT
1 ASSESS scene safety including sources of burning, electrocution, or enemy threat
2 ASSESS the casualty for responsiveness
3 RETRIEVE first aid kit
4 Follow acronym M.A.R.C.H.
5 CHECK for other injuries including eye trauma, head injury, burns, or fractures
6 COMMUNICATE with medical personnel any aid provided
M MASSIVE HEMORRHAGE
STOP LIFE-THREATENING BLEEDING.
A AIRWAY
MAINTAIN AN OPEN AIRWAY.
R RESPIRATION
ASSESS RESPIRATION AND BREATHING. LOOK, LISTEN AND FEEL!
C CIRCULATION
MONITOR CASUALTY'S BLOOD CIRCULATION AND PREVENT SHOCK.
H HYPOTHERMIA/HEAD
PREVENT HYPOTHERMIA BY KEEPING THE CASUALTY WARM AND DRY.

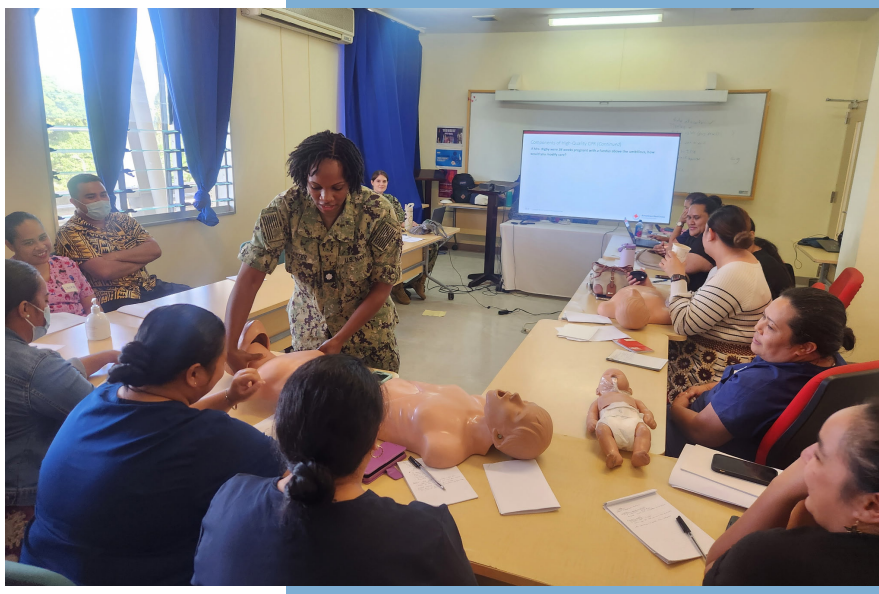
TCCC Graphic. (DVIDS)

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Public Health Nurse Advances Pacific Partnership in Tonga

From June 17 to 28, Cmdr. Christina Carter, assigned to NMRTC Twentynine Palms and serving at NH Twentynine Palms, supported Pacific Partnership's mission in Tonga. She delivered public health education, taught five basic life support classes, and strengthened international collaboration through outreach, training, and information sharing, advancing DHA and Navy Medicine's mission to promote medical readiness and global health partnerships.



Cmdr. Christina Carter teaches basic life support in the Kingdom of Tonga. (DVIDS)

Corpsmen Support Integrated Training Exercise at Twentynine Palms

More than 70 Navy corpsmen, including several assigned to NMRTC Twentynine Palms who serve at NH Twentynine Palms, supported Marines through the Navy Medicine Augmentation Program during June's Integrated Training Exercise at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms. The 31-day live-fire exercise enhances readiness for Marine Air Ground Task Force units by testing command and control, tactical operations, and sustained combat capabilities. Participating corpsmen assigned to NMRTC Twentynine Palms who work at NH Twentynine Palms (including three from China Lake and Bridgeport) included HM1 Juan C. Garcia HM1 Evan S. Knisley, HM2 Paige A. Pierce, HM2 Daniel R. Wierzbicki, and HM3s Brandon G. Martin and Jose I. Valenzuela. The effort supports Navy Medicine and DHA's mission to bolster medical readiness.

Photos courtesy of NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms Public Affairs.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Sasebo Teams Launch Joint Readiness Training

BHC and USNMRTU Sasebo have launched a new combined readiness and training program with Commander, Fleet Activities Sasebo Fire Department. Led by EMS Program Leader Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Justin Woods, the training integrates fire department first responders and clinic EMS teams to practice assessments, evacuations, and casualty movement and treatment at the Forward Deployed Naval Force-remote location.

Commander, Navy Region Japan Fire Department Sasebo firefighters. (DVIDS)

NMCSD, Kaiser Partner to Expand Respiratory Therapist Skills

Ten active-duty Respiratory Therapists (RTs) from NMC San Diego successfully launched a clinical partnership with Kaiser Permanente in early July, completing initial skills evaluations with a 100% pass rate. The collaboration, designed to expand clinical proficiency and medical force readiness, will see 1-2 RTs rotate through Kaiser facilities each month to gain experience in high-acuity care settings, enhancing respiratory therapy capabilities across NMCSD and military medicine.

Respiratory therapist intubates simulated patient. (DVIDS)

Camp Pendleton Passes Transfusion Inspection

NH Camp Pendleton's Transfusion Services successfully passed the Association for the Advancement of Blood & Biotherapies survey July 17 with zero deficiencies across more than 250 standards and line items. The inspection ensured re-accreditation and reaffirmed national certification for two years, reflecting the facility's commitment to excellence and patient safety.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Guam Conducts Joint MASCAL Drill

USNH/NMRTC Guam hosted an integrated mass casualty drill with the 36th Medical Group from Andersen Air Force Base July 17, featuring 19 simulated patients. The exercise provided valuable training to staff across all clinical areas and enhanced mass casualty cooperation between the naval hospital/NMRTC and Air Force medical personnel.

36th Medical Group airmen transport a simulated casualty during a Mass Casualty Exercise. (DVIDS)

Innovation Project Improves Newborn Care at Yokosuka

USNH Yokosuka's Hospitalman Savannah Bilben completed her Just Do It project on "Standardization of Knowledge in the Newborn Population" July 24 by creating a centralized location for newborn care Standard Operating Procedures. Bilben's project included pre- and post-surveys that showed increased staff confidence and awareness of newborn SOPs. The project received first place in the 2025 Continuous Process Improvement Fair.

HN Savannah Bilben (Photo courtesy of USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs.

Lemoore Provider Supports USS Abraham Lincoln Medical Transition

Lt. Cmdr. Erin Delaney, a medical home port provider assigned to NMRTC Lemoore and working at NHC Lemoore, completed temporary additional duty aboard USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) July 10-24. Delaney supported the aircraft carrier and air wing medical staff during a large transition to ensure continued medical care in preparation for deployment.

USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72.) (DVIDS)

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Guam Clinics Achieve 100% Customer Satisfaction

USNH Guam's Family Medicine, Orthopedics and BHC Apra Harbor received JOES "Best of the Best" recognition Aug. 8 for achieving 100% customer satisfaction during the second quarter of 2025. Front desk clerks and receptionists were specifically recognized for their exceptional service.

Pacific Fleet Surgeon Visits Guam

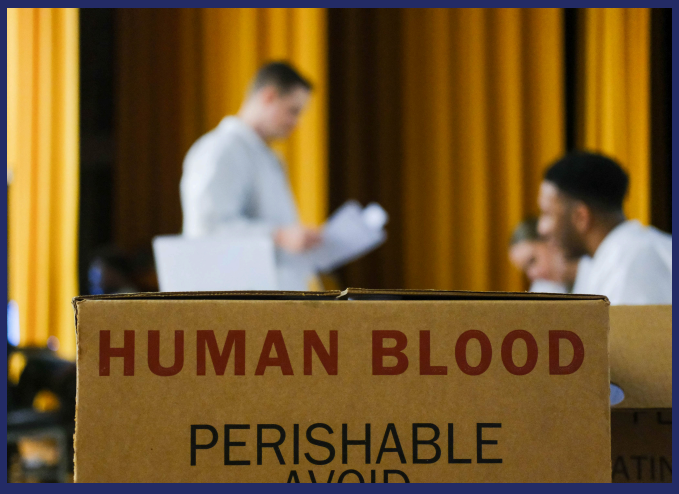
USNH Guam's triad briefed Pacific Fleet Deputy Surgeon Capt. Coleman Chandler on Aug. 28 during his visit to the MTF and Branch Health Clinics Apra Harbor and Camp Blaz. The visit included a tour of the new Camp Blaz clinic, with discussions focused on future plans and capabilities of the MTF and its branch health clinics in preparation for military growth in Guam and potential future contingency operations

Joint Outpatient Experience Survey JOES

Medical clinic on Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz.. (DVIDS)

Okinawa ASBBC Mobilizes for Regional Collection

The USINDOPACOM Armed Services Blood Bank Center (ASBBC) at USNH Okinawa team mobilized 15 members to Yokota Air Force Base Sept. 2-5, moving over 1,000 pounds of cargo. The team screened over 184 donors and collected 147 units of blood valued at $73,000 during the Sept. 3-4 blood drive. The ASBBC supports all medical facilities in the region including Iwakuni, Yokosuka, Yokota, Misawa, Okinawa, Diego Garcia and Guam, plus Special Forces mobilizations and exercises. Multiple units supported the mission, including U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Okinawa, 374th Medical Group and Yokota Air Base teams.



Boxes marked “Human Blood” wait for transport during a blood drive hosted by the ASBBC. (DVIDS)

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Exceptional MEDLOG Inspection Results for Oak Harbor

NHC Oak Harbor received an outstanding score (95% or greater) on the 2025 MEDLOG Customer Support Team West Customer Evaluation Visit Sept. 9-11. The inspection reviewed DHA medical logistics compliance across 18 programs in Healthcare Technology Management, Supply Management, Logistics Plans & Readiness, Environmental Services and DMLSS System Administration. The site received some of the first-ever 100% scores in specific programs that the CST West team has evaluated over many years of inspections.

Twentynine Palms Joins West Coast MTFs in Radiology System Upgrade

A major system upgrade of the radiology Picture Archiving and Communications System (PACS), Fuji Synapse, went live at West Coast MTFs, including NMC San Diego, NH Camp Pendleton, NH Twentynine Palms, NH Lemoore, and Nellis and Travis Air Force Bases. This aligns all sites to a unified hub and spoke model, improving image/study access, decreasing care fragmentation, and permitting cross-coverage for study interpretation between sites upon credentialing. The upgrade includes new image servers, diagnostic monitors, workstations for radiologists, and QC stations for technologists. New software provides advanced tools for image manipulation and interpretation, improving workflow for radiologists and radiology technicians after training. The upgrade significantly improves access to prior studies, enhancing the ability to characterize disease progression and evolution.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Camp Pendleton Celebrates GME Graduates

On June 27, NH Camp Pendleton held a graduation ceremony for its Graduate Medical Education programs. Thirty-five officers completed training in the Family Medicine Residency, Family Medicine Internship, Sports Medicine Fellowship, Dental General Practice Residency, and Advanced Education in General Dentistry programs.

Photo courtesy of NH/NMRTC Camp Pendleton Public Affairs.

Bremerton Corpsman Earns Radiology Certification at Lemoore

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Victoria Acosta, a temporary assigned duty radiology technician from NMRTC Bremerton who serves at NH Bremerton, has demonstrated exceptional professionalism and initiative during her assignment to NHC Lemoore's radiology department. She recently passed the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists licensure examination, reflecting her dedication to patient care, attention to detail, and commitment to professional development. Her achievement strengthens radiological services for patients in Lemoore and across the DHA.

Yokosuka Team Wins Process Improvement Award

Cmdr. Mary Piliwale and Lt. Cmdr. Asa Schaefer who are both assigned to U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Yokosuka and work at USNH Yokosuka won the Other Process Improvement category in the 2025 Naval Medical Forces Pacific Continuous Process Improvement Project Competition. Their project, "Increase Mass Vaccination Efficiency and Documentation Compliance," streamlined the manual vaccination process, reducing patient wait times and improving documentation compliance.

Photo courtesy of USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Commanding Officer Bids Farewell, Welcomes New Command Master Chief

Capt. Kathleen Cooperman, USNMRTC Okinawa commanding officer and director of USNH Okinawa, and Command Master Chief (CMDCM) Derek Nelson visited all six NMRTUs/branch clinics July 15-16. The visits allowed Cooperman to express her gratitude to personnel before her change of command Aug. 1 and provided Nelson with an opportunity to connect with the teams.

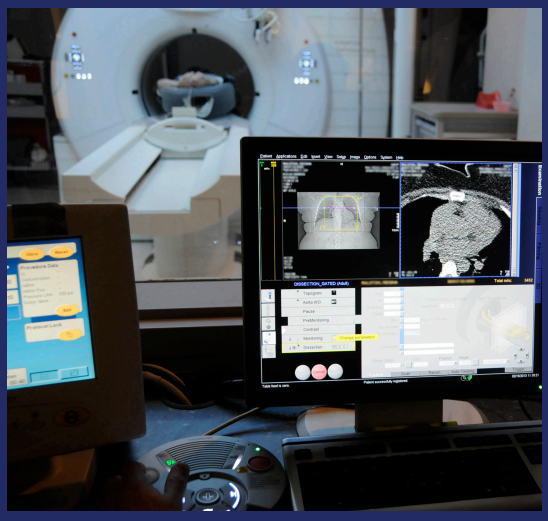
Photo courtesy of USNH/USNMRTC Okinawa Public Affairs.

Yokosuka IH Officer Recognized for Process Improvement

Lt. j.g. Robert Burke, assigned to USNMRTC Yokosuka and serving at USNH Yokosuka, earned honorable mention in the Operational Process Improvement category for his Continuous Process Improvement project, “Reduce Navy Region Japan Periodic Industrial Hygiene Survey Report Cycle Time.” His new process cut reporting time to 37 days—a 28.5% reduction from the previous average of 51.7 days.

Corpsman Earns Advanced CT Certification

NH Bremerton's HM1 Challis Miles successfully passed the Computed Tomography registry examination administered by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists, achieving certification with a first-time pass rate of 74%. Miles completed 25 credits of structured self-study and demonstrated proficiency in 125 clinical competencies at NH Bremerton and Madigan Army Medical Center. His achievement enables the hospital to maintain critical CT imaging services despite current staffing gaps. Miles will be among the first to receive the new Navy Enlisted Classification L17B for CT Technologists when implemented later this year.



CT scan at NMC Portsmouth. (DVIDS)

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Guam Earns Third Consecutive 5-Star Rating

USNH Guam earned a 5-star rating on its national TRICARE Inpatient Satisfaction Survey (TRISS) for the third consecutive quarter. Only a handful of military treatment facilities receive 5-star ratings, making Guam's achievement of three consecutive ratings and six of the last eight quarters a major accomplishment.

Atsugi Civilian Wins National IT Award

Mr. Andrew Shilt, USNMRTU Atsugi staff working at BHC Atsugi, was selected to receive the Calendar Year 2024 Capt. Joan Dooling Award for Information Professional Civilian Member of the Year July 22. The Dooling Award represents the ultimate recognition of professional achievement for Navy Medicine Enterprise Information Management/Information Technology community members. The award will be presented Aug. 25 during the 2024 Defense Health Information Technology Symposium Navy Service Day in Nashville, Tenn.

Navy Officer from USNH Yokosuka Earns Red Cross Recognition

Lt. Nicole Kollars, assigned to USNMRTC Yokosuka and serving at USNH Yokosuka, was selected as U.S. Naval Base Yokosuka Red Cross Chapter's Red Cross Volunteer of the Year 2024 and received the President Volunteer Service Award for more than 150 volunteer hours July 23. Kollars promotes base-wide collaboration as a Hands Only CPR instructor and serves as the Red Cross social media lead. Her outreach efforts advance Navy Medicine and DHA's mission by building community partnerships that enhance health care access and strengthen the military-civilian healthcare network.

American Red Cross. (DVIDS)

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Nurse Streamlines Gastroenterology Education

Lt. Essie Gutierrez was recognized Aug. 1 for innovative thinking after her team won first place at NMRTC/NH Bremerton's Process Improvement Fair. She collaborated on an educational video that streamlined gastroenterology patient care by providing interactive preoperative colonoscopy teaching, allowing nurses to handle education while providers continued seeing patients. The initiative achieved 100% improvement in patient education and satisfaction with zero negative outcomes for 230 patients.

Dr. Stephen Ferrara, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, recognizes Lt. Essie Gutierrez. (DVIDS)

NMFP Commander and DHN-Pacific Rim Director Visits Okinawa

Rear Adm. Kevin Brown, NMFP commander and director of DHN Pacific Rim, visited USNH/NMRTC Okinawa Aug. 1 to engage with Sailors and leadership about healthcare needs for warfighters and families. Brown toured the hospital, recognized staff and held an all-hands call for the Medical Corps. He also toured the Armed Services Blood Bank Center with Rear Adm. Sawamura, surgeon general and director of medicine for Japanese Maritime Defense Forces.

Navy Nurse Supports Global Health Mission

Public Health nurse Cmdr. Christina Carter participated in the Liberia Military Tropical Medicine Field Mission Aug. 1-17, contributing expertise to global health initiatives and strengthening international partnerships. The deployment highlights NMRTC/NH Twentynine Palms' commitment to readiness and global health security efforts. Carter's experience and skills gained during the mission will enhance her ability to train hospital corpsmen and other personnel in tropical medicine and global health best practices at Twentynine Palms. The mission supports Navy Medicine and DHA's goal of ensuring a globally responsive and medically ready force capable of deploying and delivering quality healthcare in any environment.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Corpsman Earns Ultrasound Certification

HM3 Hayley Murphy, assigned to USNMRTC Okinawa and working with USNH Okinawa's Radiology Department passed the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography ultrasound examination in July, earning national certification in diagnostic medical sonography. Due to her demonstrated proficiency and clinical excellence, she now serves as an official ultrasound technologist within the MTF.

CT Training for Corpsmen Fills Staffing Gap

NH Bremerton established an MOU with St. Michaels Medical Center in Silverdale, Wash., allowing radiology technologists to receive CT training at the civilian facility to address a staffing gap. The partnership, coordinated by Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (HM1) Gregory Deshields and advised by Cmdr. Sean Kim, also provides training in other modalities including MRI, ultrasound, and mammography at the facility located 15 minutes away. One hospital corpsman has completed the training with several more scheduled to follow. St. Michaels' high patient volume and case complexity provide the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities for the corpsmen to pass their CT certification boards.

Okinawa Employee Wins Network Pharmacy Award

USNH Okinawa staff member Natasha Earls was named DHN Pacific Rim Civilian Pharmacy Award Winner as General Administrative Support Staff of the Year. Earls reorganized the pharmaceutical ordering process, reducing pharmacy spending by 18% and producing $134,000 in savings by switching from brand to generic products. The award recognizes civilian pharmacy employees whose dedication, competence and exemplary performance increases DHA efficiency, enhances agency pride, and improves employee morale while helping DHA achieve its vision, mission and goals.

DHA IN ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

Diego Garcia Sailors Hone Water Rescue Skills

BHC/NMRTD Diego Garcia Sailors practiced surf-zone patient extraction, spinal stabilization, and coordinated movement from water to land-based care during waterborne casualty evacuation and first responder training July 10. The training enhances lifesaving skills essential for real-world scenarios in challenging maritime environments.

Photos courtesy of USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs.

Camaraderie at JSDF Yokosuka Sports Day

USNMRTC/USNH Yokosuka conceded the Sports Day trophy to Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) Hospital Yokosuka on July 12, as Rear Adm. Satoshi Tsukazaki, JSDF Hospital commander, accepted the win from Capt. Torrin Velazquez, USNMRTC/USNH Yokosuka commanding officer and director. The bi-annual event, hosted by JSDF Hospital Yokosuka, strengthens camaraderie and connection between the partner hospitals.

Camp Pendleton Officer Performs Anthem at Golf Tournament

Lt. Cmdr. David Acree, assigned to NMRTC Camp Pendleton and serves as division officer at NH Camp Pendleton's Family Medicine Department, performed the national anthem during opening ceremonies for the 2025 Armed Services YMCA Golf Tournament at Marine Memorial Golf Course aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton July 22. The Marine Corps Color Guard was provided by Headquarters and Service Battalion, MCB Camp Pendleton.

Photos courtesy of NH/NMRTC Camp Pendleton Public Affairs.

DHA IN ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

Cleckley Takes Command at Twentynine Palms

On July 18, Capt. Daniel Clark, NH Twentynine Palms director and NMRTC Twentynine Palms commanding officer, relinquished command to Capt. Janiese Cleckley. As part of the ceremony, Clark retired after 29 years of service. Cleckley brings extensive experience from the DHA and USNH Guantanamo Bay, having demonstrated exceptional leadership for 192 days as acting commanding officer of NMRTC Pearl Harbor where she improved fleet care access and reduced wait times. Rear Adm. Guido Valdes, then commander of Naval Medical Forces Pacific and director of Defense Health Network Pacific Rim, presided over the ceremony.

Capt. Janiese Cleckley relieved Capt. Daniel Clark as commanding officer of NMRTC Twentynine Palms and director of Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms. (DVIDS)

Pediatric Medication Training Ensures Readiness at Lemoore

Jeanne Liburdi, a NHC Lemoore nurse educator, provided critical medication administration training to 50 installation staff members July 22. The annual training included instruction on nebulizer use and rectal medication administration for seizures, addressing specific health needs of children in the Child Development Center's and Youth Center's care. This initiative supports a medically ready force by ensuring proper care for service members' children with special medical needs, alleviating family stress and enhancing warfighter mission focus.

Yokosuka Honors JSDF Admiral

Capt. Torrin Velazquez, director of USNH Yokosuka and commanding officer of USNMRTC Yokosuka, presented a letter of appreciation to Rear Adm. Satoshi Tsukazaki, commander of Japan Self-Defense Forces Hospital Yokosuka, honoring his retirement. Since August 2022, Tsukazaki's leadership strengthened the partnership between U.S. Navy Medicine, the DHA, and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force through mass casualty drills, joint disaster response training and medical conferences. Velazquez also presented a digital photo frame and his first command coin.

Photo courtesy of USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka Public Affairs.

INSIDE NMR&D

NMRC Holds Change of Command

Naval Medical Research Command (NMRC) held a Change of Command ceremony in the Daniel K. Inouye building on the Forest Glen Annex on 13 Aug. Capt. Franca Jones was relieved as commander of NMRC, and of all Navy Medicine Research & Development (NMR&D), by Capt. Eric Welsh in an official ceremony in front of staff, family, friends and several distinguished guests. Jones's tenure as NMRC commander saw significant advances in the development of countermeasures to infectious diseases affecting service member performance, advances in tracking brain injury as a result of blast exposure and an expansion of NMR&D cooperation with international partners on behalf of warfighter health and readiness.

Capt. Franca Jones and Capt. Eric Welsh salute Rear Adm. Guido Valdes during NMRC'S Change of Command ceremony. (DVIDS)

NAMRU EURAFCENT, Guinea Advance Disease Surveillance and Force Readiness

Representatives with NAMRU EURAFCENT and the University of Ghana Medical Centre (UGMC) sign a five-year Cooperative Research and Development Agreement, July 11, 2025. The agreement was formalized by NAMRU EURAFCENT commanding officer Capt. Virginia Blackman and UGMC CEO Dr. Abdul-Samed Tanko. This agreement marks continuing collaboration between NAMRU and UGMC aimed at advancing infectious disease surveillance and research throughout Ghana and the broader West African region.

NAMRU EURAFCENT and University of Ghana Medical Center representatives signs a five-year research agreement. (NMRC)

Navy Medicine Researchers Visit Yokosuka

The Naval Medical Research Unit SOUTH team from Peru visit to USNH Yokosuka from July 8-25 exceeded expectations through exceptional community engagement and overwhelming volunteer response. The successful collaboration enabled comprehensive data collection and enhanced readiness to address emerging health challenges while strengthening public health preparedness.

INSIDE NMR&D

NMR&D Wraps Up Another Successful MHSRS

The eight Navy Medicine Research and Development (NMR&D) commands wrapped up attendance at the Military Health System Research Symposium (MHSRS), which began on August 04 and concluded on August 07. Attendees participated in a range of conference activities, speaking at 26 breakout sessions, presenting 95 research posters across three poster sessions and engaging with stakeholders and potential collaborators throughout the Military Health System.

"This year's MHSRS was an outstanding demonstration of how the talented scientists of Navy Medicine Research and Development work together to field medical solutions in support of Joint Force health and readiness" - Capt. Franka Jones

Over 100 NMR&D personnel attended the MHSRS 2025, including military, civilian and contractor research, medical and support personnel (NMRC)

Pediatric Navy Medicine and Army Medicine Researchers Provisional Patent for Antimicrobial Therapy

Scientists with NMRC and WRAIR are collaborating to develop an antimicrobial therapy. (DVIDS)

Yoann Le Breton, with Naval Medical Research Command (NMRC), and Evelina Angov, with the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR), submitted a provisional patent application for an antimicrobial, non-antibiotic solution to wound care on July 17. Le Breton and Angov, both microbiologists, have experimented with different versions of their messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA)-based antimicrobial solutions to test its effectiveness on wounds, potential application methods and viability in deployed environments where infections resulting from injury present a significant threat to warfighter readiness.

EXMEDS IN FOCUS

Guam EXMED Team Support Talisman Saber 25

Led by Cmdr. Paul Lewis, Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System (ERSS) 4 deployed to Australia on July 5 to participate in Talisman Saber 25, a multinational military exercise aimed at strengthening relationships in the Indo-Pacific region. The experience gained will strengthen Expeditionary Medicine team's capabilities and will allow them to integrate their experience into the USNH Guam's efforts to provide Level III trauma capability on Guam.

ERSS 4 from NMRTC Guam conducts training in preparation for deployment. (DVIDS)

EXMED Train with Marines, Osprey for Battlefield Care

ERCS teams participate in a Joint En-Route Care Course with Marines during training at NEMWDC. (NEMWDC)

Sailors with En-Route Care System (ERCS) students participated in en-route care training conducted by the Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center (NEMWDC) in coordination with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (15th MEU), August 12-19, 2025.

The training simulated real-world casualty evacuation, requiring them to provide life-saving interventions while aboard an MV-22 Osprey. The combination of limited cabin space, noise, and movement of the aircraft replicated the challenges medical teams face in expeditionary environments.